

QATAR

What Makes America's Great Ally Special



A Special Report Prepared By The Washington Times Special Sections Department

America's closest friend in the Middle East

Throughout its history, the United States has developed and nurtured friendships with allies around the globe. Some share similar economic interests. Others are tactical political partners. Still others are strong military allies. A few share America's emphasis on education, health care and

As of now, there are 120 wholly owned US subsidiaries participating in the Qatari market. Surprisingly only 20 of those are in the oil and gas industries. There are more than 650 joint-venture companies. Most of these companies play an active role in various business markets in such as contracting, engineering consulting,

and Raytheon among others.

Qatar Airways and Boeing signed an \$18.6 billion deal which will support more than 100,000 American jobs across the US. In total, more than one million American jobs depend on business with Qatar.

Qatar has also made notable US real estate investments, such as the City-Centre-DC project in Washington, DC. The \$1.5 billion investment from Qatari Diar made it the development's principal owner and is the single largest private-industry investment in the nation's capitol.

Qatar's ongoing relationships with multiple American universities including Georgetown, Texas A&M, Carnegie Mellon, Weill Cornell, Virginia Commonwealth University and Northwestern University not only open the finest educational opportunities to their own at Doha's Education City, it ensures a flow of hundreds of millions of dollars to the universities in the US as well. Students in both Qatar and on American campuses benefit from the arrangements.

Qatar hosts 11,000 US troops at Al Udeid Air Base, the largest US military base in the Middle East. They invested \$5 billion to establish Al Udeid, which serves as the headquarters for the US Central Command, US Air Force Central Command and the Forward Command Center for US Special Operations. In total, 80% of aerial refueling in the region currently takes place at Al Udeid, where thousands of counter-terrorism missions are launched.

At the 2019 US-Qatar Strategic Dialogue, the US and Qatar signed an agreement for the expansion of the air base. Plans for the expansion include the following initiatives:

- Increasing capacity to accommodate US Navy warships.
- Building 200 housing units for officers and families on the base.
- Building schools on post to serve the children of military personnel.
- Providing job opportunities to newly retired military members to assist in the development of the Qatari Armed Forces.

The Qatar-US partnership was also strengthened through the recent purchase of F-15 E fighter jets, worth \$21 billion.

Nations, like each of us as individuals, count on their friends in the best of times and in troubled times. Supporting one and other's economies, strategic military goals, educational efforts and diplomatic efforts have proven the United States and Qatar continue to be the best of friends.

Fighting terrorism together

Qatar is America's strongest ally in the Middle East region. Qatar works extensively with the US to support international counterterrorism efforts, engaging with agencies including the State Department, the US Department of Treasury, the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN).

Qatar is clear that it does not, has not and will never support terrorism or finance any terrorist groups. They actively participate in a number of international coalitions and organizations dedicated to combatting terrorism, including the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh, INTERPOL, the Global Counter Terrorism Forum and the Financial Action Task Force.

Qatar was the first country in the Middle East region to implement the principles of the Riyadh Summit by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United States in July 2017 to counter terror financing.

In May 2017, US President Donald Trump and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries met at the Riyadh Summit in order to work towards strengthening security and defense ties. Qatar was the first country in the Middle East region to implement the principles of the Riyadh Summit by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United States in July 2017 to counter terror financing. The MoU signed by the State of Qatar and the United States goes further than any other GCC country in efforts to interdict terrorism financing.

A strong reminder of Qatar's commitment to fighting terrorism came in March 2018 when the Qatari National Counter-Terrorism Committee placed 28 individuals and entities on a terrorism list, including several Qatari nationals. US intelligence officials express great confidence that Qatar shares America's goals against radical terrorists.



PHOTO CREDIT: MANDEL NGAN/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

US President Donald Trump (R) and Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani take part in a bilateral meeting at a hotel in Riyadh on May 21, 2017.

opportunity for all. It is rare however, when a nation shares in all of these items with the United States.

The Middle Eastern nation of Qatar is just such a rarity.

Diplomatic relations between Qatar and the United States were established in 1972. Nearly 50 years later, Qatar is home to thousands of Americans and the United States is Qatar's largest foreign investor and its largest source of imports. By virtually any measure, America's friendship with Qatar ranks among its top relationships worldwide.

Not only is the association between the two nations healthy and prospering, it continues to grow in a variety of ways including economic, political, militarily, educational and cultural.

Geographically speaking, Qatar is a small nation. Economically however, its relationship with the United States rates as a powerhouse. The value of Qatari imports to the US in 2018 totaled \$855 million, while the value of US exports to Qatar amounted to \$5.15 billion, growing by \$270 million over the prior year. That means the annual trade between the two is more than \$6 billion.

infrastructure, education and information technology.

Clearly US companies recognize the stability and benefits of investing in Qatar but the investment of time and money delivers the other way as well. Over the past several years Qatar has continually increased its investments in the US. Most recently Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) pledged to invest \$45 billion in the US in 2019-2020. To date, \$30 billion has already been committed across various industries. In June 2018, Qatar announced they would invest \$20 billion in US oil and gas companies through Qatar Petroleum over the next five years. They are also looking to invest another \$5 billion in downstream assets.

Qatar Petroleum International and ExxonMobil's \$10 billion joint investment to develop the Golden Pass LNG export terminal in Texas remains one of Qatar's largest single investments in the US.

While energy is certainly a key industry, Qatar is investing with a variety of American companies including not only ExxonMobil, but Boeing, ConocoPhillips

The Gulf Crisis: A nation responds

There's an Arabic proverb popular in the Middle East: "The best answer will come from the person who is not angry."

Unfortunately, the anger is long and deep in the nasty row dividing some of America's closest allies in the Middle East, which means any quick answer to this diplomatic and security headache is hard to see.

Two years ago, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates banded together to impose an economic and diplomatic blockade against Qatar, the tiny but wealthy country that hosts Washington's most strategic military base in the Persian Gulf, over what they claim is its willingness to work with Shiite Iran and its suspected support for jihadi groups such as Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.

Qatar, which sits atop some of the world's largest proven natural gas reserves, has vehemently denied any wrongdoing, claiming the accusations against it are driven less by legitimate security concerns than by regional jealousy over the nation's massive economic prosperity in recent years.

But the Saudis, Emiratis and others aren't yielding. The boycotting nations have cut off land, sea and air routes to Qatar, a small nation that sticks out like a thumb in the Persian Gulf.

Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar are all heavily armed members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the U.S.-backed political-military alliance that also includes Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman. While the latter three have stayed neutral toward the boycott against Qatar, the acrimony is so deep in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi that many say it puts the very future of the GCC at risk.

Smear campaign?

Qatar's leaders say the accusations against them are over the top.

While issuing broad denials in public and rejecting the Saudi demands, several officials — including members of the Qatari royal family — in background interviews contemptuously dismissed the charges as part of an "ill-conceived smear campaign" orchestrated by the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

"The accusation that Qatar supports terrorism is ridiculous," said one Qatari official. "How could a country hosting a U.S. military base that's carrying out a major bombing campaign against terrorists all over the region be itself considered to support terrorism?"

The real reason for the feud, the official said, is that the Saudis and Emiratis envy Doha's economic growth and expanding regional influence — influence the Saudis once held all to themselves.

"They're doing this also because they're jealous," the official said, "that Qatar and not them has been chosen to host the [soccer] World Cup in 2022."

Indeed, terrorism may be one of the last things that comes to mind amid the frenetic pace of economic transformation evident on every street corner

the Saudi-led effort has had just the opposite effect.

Among other food supplies cut-off at the onset of the embargo, milk, which had been nearly 100% imported, became non-existent. Perhaps nothing has signified the resilience of the Qatari people in the face of adver-



PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Stop and think about the significance of these cows for a moment. An industry that literally didn't exist in Qatar prior to the blockade is now flourishing and contributing to their GDP.

in Qatar's capital. While the growing beachside metropolis of Doha is still small in comparison with rival Dubai in the UAE, gleaming new skyscrapers line the horizon. The Qatari capital is packed with new and expensively designed parks and opulent museums, all paid for by the global natural gas boom.

"Twenty-five percent of the world's cranes — the world's cranes — are here," said a U.S. military official who lives in Doha. "They just set a record for the most earth-boring machines in the world operating simultaneously. Six. Just incredible. So, it is a nation being born."

Regardless of the reasons for the blockade, what has been the result? Clearly intended to wreak economic, diplomatic and cultural chaos, it seems

sity more than their brief milk crisis. Empty dairy shelves and dry cereal became the norm immediately following the implementation of the embargo.

Within the first few months of the blockade, however, Qatar had flown in thousands of dairy cows and set up a state of the art milking facility a little more than 30 miles north of Doha, thus quenching the thirst of and providing fresh milk for their millions of residents.

Baladna Farms, like so many Qatari enterprises, thrived beyond all expectation. While the initial herd was flown in, three thousand more Holstein cows, bred in Arizona, California and Wisconsin, were shipped in by sea. Successful in their efforts to provide milk to everyone throughout Qatar,

Power International Holding Group, who owns Baladna, has begun to export surplus milk.

Stop and think about the significance of these cows for a moment. An industry that literally didn't exist in Qatar prior to the blockade is now flourishing and contributing to their GDP.

Another potential casualty of the diplomatic feud was the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Qatar is scheduled to host the 32 team, month-long, worldwide sporting event. Construction was well underway on 9 new stadiums and improving 3 existing ones to meet FIFA standards. Prior to the blockade Qatar had been well ahead of schedule and right on budget with construction. With shipping lanes, air routes and land routes all impacted by the blockade, costs began to sky-rocket and the schedule began to slip. In an amazing bit of foresight however, Qatar had required all contractors to include a variety of contingency plans to cover nearly any scenario. The Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy called for the contingency plans to be executed and within mere months, the stadiums were back on schedule and on or under budget.

In general, adversity tells a lot about people. Will they capitulate to circumstances or will they come together for the common good? In Qatar it has demonstrably been the latter. In a country of 2.7 million people where only 300,000 are natives, the potential exists for the diversity among the vast majority of the population to splinter. People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, many of whom have only been in Qatar for a few years could be excused for having varying responses when threatened by disgruntled neighboring countries. Fear of the unknown might cause some to flee. Others could sew the seeds of discontent at their workplace or in their neighborhood.

In fact just the opposite occurred. Bolstered by the strong reforms in human rights and guaranteed minimum standards for housing, labor and education, these workers from all over the globe stepped up. Leaders in the defense industry call it a new found sovereignty. H.E. Hassan Al Thawadi, Secretary General of the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy says after the blockade, "Nationalism came back."

Call it what you will, but one thing is clear. The unity of effort, the undying intent to persevere and succeed, regardless of the blockade status, has rallied together the nearly 3 million inhabitants of Qatar. If the intent of the countries that initiated the gulf crisis was to break the spirit of this nation, they have failed miserably.



PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Qatar stands strong against terrorism

Islamic State remains a mortal threat to the region despite its recent battlefield defeats, Qatar's foreign minister warned in an interview, cautioning that the terrorist group could rise again if Washington and its Arab allies fail to address the root causes fueling religious extremism.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani, the top diplomat from the small but influential Persian Gulf nation, said the military victories over Islamic State should be celebrated but the terrorist group's ideology must be crushed "in order to defeat any version" of the group rearing its head.

A portion of the Islamic State has likely dissolved into the general population of the Middle East, Sheikh al-Thani said, and nations across the region need to "become more responsive to their people and the needs of their people to fill the vacuum that was there and created [such] organizations."

The sheikh serves as both deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs. In an interview with The Washington Times, he touched on a wide range of other matters, including the future of the Iranian nuclear deal, the

growing economic ties between Qatar and the United States and the bitter diplomatic stalemate that has divided Qatar from other U.S. Arab allies in the region.

His remarks on the need for vigilance against terrorism were noteworthy because Qatar has been accused by Saudi Arabia and other Arab powers of supporting terrorist groups and radical Islam.

In addition to major investments by U.S. companies such as Exxon Mobil Corp. in Qatar's oil and gas sectors, the Qataris host what is widely considered Washington's most strategic military base in the Persian Gulf.

Two years ago, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates banded together to impose an economic and diplomatic blockade against Qatar over a variety of issues including what they say is its weak posture on Islamic extremism.

The rift among Arab nations within

the Gulf Cooperation Council has put Washington on shaky diplomatic ground. The Trump administration has resisted siding with Saudi Arabia because of strong American interests in Qatar.

In addition to major investments by U.S. companies such as Exxon Mobil Corp. in Qatar's oil and gas sectors, the Qataris host what is widely considered Washington's most strategic military base in the Persian Gulf. Al Udeid Air Base, situated just outside Doha, is home to U.S. Air Force Central Command and is critical to U.S. military operations in the Middle East, Afghanistan and South Asia.

Sheikh al-Thani said the charges from Saudi Arabia and others were exaggerated to justify an attempt to contain Doha's economic rise.

"Our country has been subject to an unjust aggression," he said, adding that claims by Saudi Arabia and the others have created "an unnecessary distraction for the region."

Sheikh al-Thani took a cautious tone on the Iranian nuclear deal, which President Trump has harshly criticized but which other parties to the deal, including the European Union, China and Russia, continue to support.

"We were not part of the deal," Sheikh al-Thani said. "But what we know is that we need to make sure that any nuclear program which will be developed [in Iran], we have to assure that it's a peaceful program."

Iran, he said, "is a neighbor, and we need to deal with it in a way that ensures the security of the entire region is not affected by any confrontation, to ensure that Iran doesn't have any destabilizing factors for us."

Despite U.S. mediation efforts, the sheikh said he was not optimistic about a quick end to the diplomatic divide in the Gulf Cooperation Council.

"It will not end by bullying, this is for sure," he said. "It will end if every country understands that its rights and responsibilities are equal to other nations."

He said Qatar, with U.S.-backing, has repeatedly called for dialogue with the Saudis and the others to no avail. "The other side is not willing," he said. "President Trump invited everybody to Camp David. We responded positively; they just rejected the invitation."

One thing is abundantly clear. Qatar sees the United States as a solid ally and great friend.

World leader in natural gas

Qatar's modest history of fishing and pearling was forever changed in the mid-20th century with the discovery of oil reserves. First discovered in 1939 but delayed by World War II, oil made it possible for Qatar to begin expanding and modernizing in the 1950s. Qatar joined OPEC in 1961. Oil paved the way to a variety of opportunities and in 1971 Qatar became an independent state.

It was that same year, 1971, when exploration engineers discovered natural gas off Qatar's northeast coast. At the time no one realized just how important this find would prove to be. Over the next 14 years multiple appraisal wells were drilled, fifteen in all. In 1985 it was established that Qatar's North Field was the largest non-associated natural gas field in the world. It was determined to have recoverable reserves of more than 900 million standard cubic feet. To put that in perspective, the North Field made up more than 10% of the entire world's known reserves. The only countries with larger proven gas reserves were Russia and Iran.

The North Field lies off the northeast shore of the Qatar peninsula and covers a massive underground area, equivalent to about half the land area of the State of Qatar.

QatarGas, established in 1984, is the entity that develops, produces, and markets hydrocarbons produced from the North Field. It is processed to produce LNG, GTL, NGL and other gas-related industries, in addition to pipeline gas for export.

Today, QatarGas is unparalleled in the industry in terms of reliability, size and service. It operates 14 Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) gas trains with a total annual production capacity of 77 million tons. That provides about one third of the global market of LNG and makes QatarGas the largest LNG producer in the world.

In an effort to ensure their long-term global gas position, Qatar has plans to boost its liquefied natural gas production to as much as 100 million tons annually. It exports gas at a daily rate of about 11 billion cu ft. The country's proven gas reserves remain at an estimated 880 trillion cu ft. meaning Qatar will continue to be a world leader in gas sales for one hundred years or more.

Always the Good Neighbor

Showing amazing restraint in the face of the Gulf Crisis blockade initiated against Qatar in June of 2017 by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt, the world's gas leader has opted not to cut off the gas it supplies to its



angry neighbors. In a discussion with The Washington Times a high ranking Qatari official who preferred not to be named told of the intense debate in the immediate aftermath of the onset of the economic and diplomatic blockade.

As the official describes it, he and other members of government leadership spent nearly one full day laying out for the Emir of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, all the reasons to cut off the natural gas being supplied by pipeline. If Saudia Arabia and Bahrain wouldn't allow Qatar to use land, air or sea routes for commerce, why would Qatar continue to provide this valuable energy source to them? Their argument was passionate and detailed. The impact of cutting the natural gas supply would be immediate and harsh. Cutting power would send a strong and unmistakable message.

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After listening intently, the Emir announced Qatar would not be cutting off the natural gas pipeline supplies to their disgruntled Arab brethren. Incredulous, the officials who had been trying to persuade him demanded to know why. The Emir smiled and asked his team of experts who they thought would be

impacted by a power shortage in neighboring countries? Would the lights go out at the palaces? Of course not. Royalty would find an alternative to ensure their own daily comfort. It would be the masses, the people that would suffer. His Highness saw no reason to inflict punishment on the people of neighboring countries even if the leadership of those same countries sought to harm his people. Nothing good could come from such an act.

Today, not only does the supply of natural gas from Qatar continue to flow, but when a problem arose with the pipeline, Qatar found alternative delivery means to ensure an uninterrupted power supply.

Quitting OPEC

Qatar joined OPEC in 1961 and over the years was a team player in the oil cartel. Their 600,000 barrels per day however, ranked Qatar as one of its smaller oil producers and limited their influence on the direction and decisions of OPEC. In January of 2019, after nearly six decades in the organization, Qatar called it quits.

"Qatar has decided to withdraw its membership from OPEC effective January 2019 and this decision was communicated to OPEC this morning," Qatar's Energy Minister Saad Sherida al-Kaabi said at the end of last year. In a Reuters article in December 2018 he was dismissive of the idea that the move was driven by the Saudi's role in the blockade and the fact that Saudi Arabia is considered by most market watchers as the de facto leader of OPEC.

More likely is that the decision was an economic one. Qatar's position as the

world's largest seller of Liquefied Natural Gas is clearly a higher priority than their relatively modest output of oil. Focusing the bulk of their time, expertise and planning efforts on their strongest possible future is a logical choice.

Ultimately the decision puts Qatar firmly in control of its own destiny. Though the Gulf Crisis was clearly intended to weaken them, Saad al-Kaabi can't help but make the obvious observation. "The blockade has made Qatar stronger."

Funding a Prosperous Future

While the natural gas reserves have ample volume to supply the world for the next century, Qatar is taking nothing for granted. They are using the windfall from today's abundant success to fund education, healthcare and a standard of living that will benefit their people for generations to come. They are investing in a variety of industries worldwide to ensure a varied stream of income. They are developing multiple industries on their own soil, seeking the stability of a diverse economy. Perhaps most importantly, Qatar is investing in human capital at home.





Strategic U.S. military presence

AL UDEID AIR BASE, Qatar — The date is October 5, 2017. It's a sweltering 104 degrees outside, and that's not counting the geopolitical heat that swirls around this once-classified yet massive U.S. Air Force hub located in the heart of the Persian Gulf. But inside, Maj. Gen. David S. Nahom's office, atop a nondescript building housing the logistical brain of American air power stretching from the edge of Africa all the way to Afghanistan, the mood is very cool.

It has to be. This is where one of the most complex campaigns in the history of the U.S. Air Force is being orchestrated to pound Islamic State into submission — without setting off an unintentional conflict with Russian, Syrian and Iranian forces also buzzing over the battlefield.

Gen. Nahom knows this and the stone-like calm across the muscular features of his face seems only to be driven by it. "Just to give you an idea," he says, pausing to direct a green laser pointer toward a movie-theater-sized map of Syria and Iraq that his office looms over: "If you look right here, this is mine, every green thing is one of our airplanes."

The vast digital screen is peppered with hundreds of green dots, and a particular glut of them is clustered around the besieged headquarters of the Islamic State in Syria. "That's Raqqa," said the general. "You can see that stack of airplanes right now."

"You can see the numbers up there, and then imagine Afghanistan," he adds, driving home the sheer scope of

what is being monitored and directed from Al Udeid, which is also a linchpin overseeing air operations against the Taliban some 1,100 miles to the northeast.

But as vital as it is, the American presence at the base also finds itself a pawn in a damaging diplomatic feud that has divided Qatar from Washington's other critical Arab allies in the region, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt. As the Saudi camp presses the Trump administration to take its side in the dispute, the Qataris hold a crucial bargaining chip of having such a strategic U.S. military operation located inside their borders.

The base is technically Qatari property playing host to the forward headquarters of U.S. Central Command. But there is little question that it's sun-drenched expanses, hosting about 11,000 U.S. personnel, represent one of the U.S. military's most enduring and most strategically positioned operations on the planet.

It's a point Gen. Nahom and others emphasized during visit by The Washington Times — offering a sober counter-narrative to speculation by some in Washington over whether Al Udeid could prove a casualty of the diplomatic breakdown among American allies.

Crisis looms

The feud exploded into public view in June of 2017 when the Saudis and their allies launched a diplomatic and economic offensive against Qatar,

reflecting what they said was the tiny, energy-rich country's too-soft posture toward Iran and support for jihadi groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood. The clash reflected a number of other personal and political vendettas, including animosity to Qatar's ruling emir and Doha's funding of the Arab-language news service Al-Jazeera. Qatar vehemently denies the charges.

The situation lays bare a predicament for Washington that Qatar's rivals are eager to exploit. The UAE's ambassador to the United States has called on Congress to "consider moving" American operations out of Al Udeid and suggested that the UAE, already the site of a key U.S. Navy port of call, also could host the air base.

Air Force 'nerve center'

Here's the catch: None of the commanders interviewed by The Times at Al Udeid offered even the slightest hint that the regional diplomatic crisis has sparked consideration of packing up and leaving.

In fact, on March 9 2018, the US approved a request from Qatar to upgrade the Qatari Emiri Air Force operations center. Qatar will spend \$197 million upgrading the technology and logistics capabilities of the center. These upgrades will help the foreign policy and national security of the United States, while serving to improve Qatar's military and defense capabilities against terrorism in the region.

At the 2019 US-Qatar Strategic

Ongoing commitment to the United States

Qatar supports the US defense industry through purchases of American made military equipment. The Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program between Qatar and the US is valued at \$26 billion. Major defense sales include:

- 2018: US State Department authorizes a proposed Foreign Military Sale to Qatar of defense articles and services in support of a Direct Commercial Sale of the National Advanced Surface to Air Missile System (NASAMS) for an estimated cost of \$215 million
- 2018: US State Department authorizes a proposed FMS for weapons systems estimated at \$300 million, which support the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States.
- 2017: Pentagon announces that Boeing was awarded a \$6 billion contract to sell 36 F-15 fighter jets to Qatar. The contract supports 50,000 total jobs and more than 550 suppliers in 42 states.
- 2016: US State Department approves possible FMS sale to Qatar for the continuation of logistics support services and equipment at an estimated cost of \$700 million.
- 2016: US State Department approves FMS sale to Qatar for Mk-V Fast Patrol Boats worth \$124.02 million.
- 2016: US State Department approves FMS sale to Qatar for Javelin Guided Missiles worth \$20 million.
- 2016: US State Department approves a foreign military sale (FMS) to Qatar for RIM-116C & RIM-116C-2 Rolling Airframe Missiles worth \$260 million.
- 2015: Qatar purchases four Boeing C-17 Globemasters, doubling its fleet.
- 2014: US sells to Qatar: Apache attack helicopters, Patriot Missile Systems, and Javelin air defense systems valued at \$11 billion.
- 2012-2013: US sells \$23 billion in arms to Qatar.
- 2009: Qatar introduces two C-17 Globemasters to its Fleet.

Dialogue, the US and Qatar signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to deepen cooperation for the expansion of Al Udeid Air Base, building on Qatar's announcement at the 2018 dialogue.

To hear Gen. Nahom tell it, the reasons are simple. "If you had to put a thumbtack on the map, you could not ask for a better strategic location," he said of the Qatari peninsula, which juts like an appendage from Saudi Arabia into the Persian Gulf adjacent to Iran.

There is also the "unbelievable quality in the size of the runways and ramps [here]," said the general, who serves as deputy commander of U.S. Air Force Central Command.

Sources at the Pentagon indicate that about 100 U.S. planes operate from Al Udeid. They include C-17 cargo jets and KC-135 Stratotankers, famous as the Air Force's "flying gas stations." An undisclosed number of B-52 bombers, which require especially long and durable runways, are here as part of Washington's increased campaign against Islamic State.

"Al Udeid is a logistics hub," Brig. Gen. Jason R. Armagost said in an interview at the base in September 2017, adding that the base is prepared should the Trump administration significantly ramp up operations in Afghanistan.

"It's a theater hub for large aircraft," said Gen. Armagost, who heads the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, technically the largest expeditionary wing in the Air Force. "On any given day, we service Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. Whereas a base in Jordan or a base in Afghanistan deals with their local tactical problem, we support ... theater problems."

But there's something else at Al Udeid that sets the base apart from other Air Force installations around the world: a secretive facility known as the Combined Air Operations Center, or CAOC.

It's above the CAOC that Gen. Nahom has his office. It's also there that representatives from the vast U.S.-led global coalition to defeat Islamic State coalesce around a range of intelligence feeds to direct all air support and precision airstrikes across the 20-nation region overseen by Central Command.

Video from surveillance drones played on large screens during a visit to the CAOC, which Pentagon literature describes as "the nerve center of the air campaign."

A hub for allies

The center offers unique assets not lost America's coalition partners against Islamic State. Britain's Royal Air Force headquarters, along with about 100 British military personnel,



are also based at Al Udeid.

"One of the reasons we're [here] is because this is where the [Central Command] CAOC is," British Air Commodore Johnny Stringer said. "Not only are my own U.K. intelligence and targeting and ops teams on the floor in the CAOC, but we also have a whole number of [other] U.K. embeds across the CAOC as well."

The U.S. has by far the most aircraft deployed in the region. But Commodore Stringer said the CAOC allows for a level of allied military-to-military cohesion and coordination not seen in American fighting since World War II.

"Qatar," the commodore said, "has been incredibly supportive — look at what they host here."

The very fact is that the CAOC is at Al Udeid, and that there are so many partners involved — including the Qataris.

Why not Saudi Arabia?

The history of the U.S. military presence in Qatar stretches back to before Sept. 11, 2001.

It's a history inexorably tied to the Clinton administration's decision during the late 1990s to begin moving personnel out of Saudi Arabia following a series of nightmarish developments — most notably the 1996 terrorist bombing of a housing complex in the Saudi city of Khobar that left 19 U.S. service members dead.

U.S. frustration over operating in Saudi Arabia was already boiling when al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, himself a Saudi, cited the American military's presence in the nation — and more precisely, near the Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina — as a core motivation behind 9/11 and the Khobar Towers attack.

To put it bluntly, said one U.S. official, the Americans were "looking for new real estate."

Leaders in Qatar, whose roughly 300,000 citizens have long existed in

the shadow of much larger Saudi Arabia, saw an opportunity. They began pouring money into Al Udeid and making overtures to the Americans to relocate. Donald H. Rumsfeld, President George W. Bush's defense secretary, announced abruptly in April 2003 that the Pentagon was pulling all U.S. troops out of Saudi Arabia and turning over control of the base to Saudi officials.

"The American military basically had to flee Saudi Arabia, and Qatar took them in, welcomed them in, in the middle of the night," a senior Qatari official said on background.

Washington began using the base on

a clandestine basis during the weeks after 9/11 as part of the U.S. military's scramble to open a campaign against al Qaeda in Afghanistan. In 2003, the base was vital to Mr. Bush's campaign to topple to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

Operations and permanent U.S. structures at Al Udeid have been growing since. But, reflecting regional sensitivities, the Pentagon long sought to keep the base's role quiet. As late as 2013, American military personnel were ordered not to speak about the base or disclose its location beyond describing it as somewhere in Southwest Asia.

Such protocols have eased in recent years and appear to have washed away almost entirely amid the diplomatic crisis surrounding Qatar.

Photos of at Al Udeid were splashed across the Arab press after Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani made a special Sept. 11 visit to the base to pose with personnel from Qatar's Emir Air Force in front of warplanes and to meet with U.S. commanders at the base.

The Qataris are building their own air force headquarters at al Udeid and the White House has commitments for a multi-billion dollar sale of F-15 fighter jets to Doha. The contract supports 50,000 total jobs and more than 550 suppliers in 42 states.

Gen. Nahom said U.S. forces can be expected be here for the foreseeable future. "I just think we have a good friend in Qatar, and we have a very good location to operate out of," he said. "I don't see us reducing for a long time."

A firm commitment

- Qatar does not, has not and will never support terrorism or finance any terrorist groups. They work closely with their allies to act on their commitment to defeat terrorism. The same cannot be said for the blockading nations.
- Qatar works extensively with the US to support international counterterrorism efforts, engaging with agencies including the State Department, the US Department of Treasury, the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN).
- Qatar is an active participant in the American-led coalition against Daesh, and host America's most important military facility in the Middle East at Al Udeid Air Base, from which strikes against terrorist targets are launched.
- Qatar actively participates in a number of international coalitions and organizations dedicated to combatting terrorism, including the Global Coalition to Defeat Daesh, INTERPOL, the Global Counter Terrorism Forum and the Financial Action Task Force.
- The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the State of Qatar and the United States builds on the long history of cooperation and partnership between the US and Qatar and goes further than any other GCC country in efforts to interdict terrorism financing.
- Qatar is tackling the root causes of terrorism: hopelessness. Their programs for education and economic development are offering hope for a better future to young and old alike.



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Qatar Airways

Simply the best

A generation ago the word Cadillac became synonymous with excellence. When someone was trying to describe the very best of a certain category there was no greater compliment than to be labeled “the Cadillac of desk chairs,” or “the Cadillac of kitchen appliances.” The category didn’t matter, the comparison to Cadillac did.

Today, Qatar Airways could be described as the Cadillac of world airlines, except even that description doesn’t do justice to the unparalleled level of excellence achieved by QA. Qatar Airways has been named ‘World’s Best Airline’ by Skytrax and year after year consistently ranks at the top in multiple categories from a variety of sources.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker says, “This is due in large part to the strong and lasting partnership we have built with American companies, including Boeing, Gulfstream, GE, Honeywell and others, who have been instrumental in helping us deliver the high-quality product for which we are known to our passengers around the world. Together with our American partners, we will continue to help strengthen the global aviation industry and America’s economy.”

Among the 2018 Qatar Airways awards:

- World’s Best Business Class - Skytrax Awards
- Best Business Class Seat - Skytrax Awards
- Best First Class Airline Lounge - Skytrax Awards
- Best Airline in the Middle East - Skytrax Awards
- World’s Best Business Class - TripAdvisor Travelers’ Choice Awards

Four times Qatar Airways has been given Airline of the Year Award by Skytrax. Not bad for a company that was only founded just over twenty years ago.

Qatar Airways has an important message for America, “Our success is also America’s shared success.” That’s quite a statement coming from the airline generally considered as the best on earth.

When Qatar Airways launched as a new carrier in the mid-1990s their CEO laid out what he felt at the time was a bold path. In his very first interview he confidently predicted QA would have a 35 aircraft fleet serving 35 destinations. Fast forward to 2019 and the world’s premier airline has exceeded all expectations. The fleet currently has 252 aircraft. They are serving 180 passenger destinations. They also serve 63 cargo destinations, which other than UPS and FedEx is more cargo stops than any other carrier on earth.

The national carrier of the State of Qatar is one of the world’s fastest-growing airlines, operating one of the youngest fleets. According to Al Baker they are on a pace to take delivery of new aircraft in the immediate future at an average of one every ten days.

Qatar Airways proudly points to independently-gathered data that documents the airline’s robust \$91.8 billion investment in the American economy through its huge American-made aircraft orders. The award-winning airline also directly supports 123,000

American jobs and flies 3.1 million visitors to the US annually – visitors who helped pump an extra \$4 billion into the US economy in one year alone.

The Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive says “We are very proud of the investment we have made, and continue to make every year, in the US economy. Our 332 American-made aircraft are testament to the faith we have in America, and in American-made products.

Not only is their service world-class, Qatar Airways has been financially successful as well. In fiscal year 2016/2017 the airline reported a profit of \$540 million.

In June of 2017 however, a Saudi-led coalition of Middle Eastern countries abruptly severed diplomatic ties with Qatar. Borders were closed. Trade was cut off. Qatar Airways was forced to drop 18 regional routes to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, including 20 flights daily to Dubai. Worse yet, Qatar Airways was blocked from using the airspace over their neighboring countries.

The result of the closed airspace was long detours, extending flight times in some cases by more than an hour. Al Baker says on average, every flight, every day now takes 22 minutes longer. The blockade thus costs Qatar Airways more in aircraft fuel, in crew expenses, and in flight hours on aircraft engines and parts. The net effect is that Qatar Airways experienced significant losses for the 2017/2018 fiscal year.

They have not sat idly by however. Almost immediately following the onset of the Gulf crisis, Qatar implemented visa-free travel for over 80 nationalities. This was done to encourage more tourism and increase transfers at Doha’s Hamad International Airport (DOH). QA released a video entitled “No borders, only horizons” denouncing the isolation imposed by its neighbors. The video subsequently went viral, accumulating over 54 million views.

Losing the 18 Middle East routes initially forced the carrier to ground some aircraft. If a plane isn’t flying it isn’t generating revenue so Qatar Airways pursued growth elsewhere, introducing 14 new routes since the beginning of the blockade. The new routes include Dublin, Nice, Prague, Sarajevo, Kiev, St. Petersburg, Skopje, and Thessaloniki in Europe; Chiang Mai, Pattaya, and Penang in Asia; Adana and Sohar in the Near East; and Canberra in Australia.

Despite the unique challenges caused by the Gulf Crisis, Qatar Airways continues to expand its routes and services, all while maintaining the award-winning levels in everything from cabin service to food and beverage, to airport lounges and in-flight seat comfort.

Al Baker sums it up, “From its inception twenty years ago, Qatar Airways has taken a leading role in setting the standard for quality international travel. It remains one of our principal goals two decades later.” His hunger to perpetually be the best is palpable and the result is readily evident to anyone who travels Qatar Airways.

QIA: Investing in the world, investing in the future

Qatar Investment Authority is a sovereign wealth fund of the Government of Qatar specializing in public equity, fixed income, private equity, startups, real estate, and alternative assets.

QIA strives to invest and manage funds assigned to it by the Supreme Council for Economic Affairs and Investment (SCEAI). The QIA is owned by the government of Qatar but reports to the SCEAI. Additionally, it is managed by a board of directors. Qatar's State Audit Bureau is responsible for auditing the financial operations of the QIA.

The QIA does not have any mandated limitations on its investment universe and is able to invest in both domestic and foreign marketable securities, real property, real estate, alternative assets, private equity funds, and credit and fixed income securities. The QIA also employs derivatives in its investment strategy. Most of QIA's investments are outside of Qatar.

Qatar Investment Authority is a major shareholder in Heathrow Airport, holding 20 percent of the airport.

Qatar's sovereign-wealth fund is the third largest investor shareholder in Volkswagen.

QIA was one of the major financiers of a recent development known as City-CenterDC, as it invested \$650 million into the project.

It is not uncommon to see stories involving the Qatar Investment Authority at the top of financial news reports including sources such as Bloomberg and the Wall Street Journal. A sampling of reports from 2019 alone:

May 2019 in USA

Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) today announces that it is leading an over \$500 million equity financing in SoFi, a mobile-first personal finance company, alongside existing investors and SoFi CEO, Anthony Noto.

SoFi plans to use the funds to continue to invest in its rapid rate of innovation and growth, fulfilling its mission to help SoFi members achieve financial independence to realize their ambitions. The investment round values SoFi at \$4.3 billion on a pre-money basis and further strengthens SoFi's balance sheet to total capital of \$2.3 billion.

April 2019 in New York City, USA

Crown Acquisitions (Crown) and Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) announced a co-investment deal to acquire



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PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

prime retail properties in Fifth Avenue and Times Square in New York City.

Crown Acquisitions and QIA have co-invested to acquire a 24 percent stake each in a Vornado Realty Trust portfolio of prime retail properties, estimated at \$5.6bn and more than 910,000 sq. ft., containing many of New York City's high end shopping and most iconic leisure destinations. On Times Square, the portfolio of assets include one of New York's most recognizable retail blocks and home to brands including MAC, Polo, Forever

21, and Disney, at 1540 Broadway, and the retail space at one of the world's most popular touristic destinations, the Marriott Marquis at 1535 Broadway.

The world famous Fifth Avenue, New York City, has been synonymous with luxury retailing and home to many of the world's leading brands for more than a century.

January 2019 in Africa

Airtel Africa Ltd, a subsidiary of Bharti Airtel (Airtel), on Wednesday said that Qatar Investment Authority

(QIA) — the sovereign wealth fund of the State of Qatar — has agreed to invest \$200 million through a primary equity issuance in the company.

The proceeds will be used to further reduce Airtel Africa's existing net debt, the company said in a statement.

The investment from QIA is in continuation of the recent \$1.25 billion investment by six leading global investors including Warburg Pincus, Temasek, Singtel and SoftBank Group International and others.

The QIA was founded in 2005 and is based in Doha, Qatar with additional offices in Mumbai, India; New Delhi, India; New York, United States; and Beijing, China.



جهاز قطر للاستثمار
QATAR INVESTMENT AUTHORITY



World Cup 2022

Transformational moment is good for entire Middle East region

DOHA, Qatar — Traveling the African continent in 2010 there was one unifying theme no matter where one stopped. South Africa was hosting the FIFA World Cup 2010.

Despite the nerve racking reality that stadium construction was still underway just weeks before the event was scheduled to kick off and despite the fact nearly everyone was certain the infrastructure intended to handle people and transportation had not reached its long-promised goals, stress was noticeably absent from the South African people. The overwhelming sentiment was pride. Africa was hosting the World Cup!

Whether 2500 miles away in the country of Cameroon, 5000 miles away in Ghana or talking to the people of Senegal, some 6300 miles away, all were excited about the World Cup being hosted in Africa. In fact virtually every one of Africa's 54 countries referred to the month-long extravaganza as "our World Cup." They saw it as an opportunity to showcase the whole continent rather than simply the property of the nation of South Africa.

Fast forward to 2019 and preparations for World Cup 2022 in Qatar. In contrast to the South Africa 2010 experience, the stadiums are being completed ahead of schedule and in some cases, under

budget. The hotel options and public transportation infrastructure are coming together nicely. Also in direct contrast to 2010 however, neighboring countries are not celebrating the impending spotlight of the sporting world.

Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt implemented an economic and diplomatic blockade against Qatar two years ago. Rather than celebrate a chance to show off their corner of the globe, they've made demands that Qatar forfeit hosting duties for World Cup 2022. Why on earth, given the chance to have several months worth of positive, upbeat news coming out of the Middle East in the lead up and playing of the world's most popular sporting event, would Qatar's neighbors want to stop it?

Hassan Al Thawadi is the Secretary General of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, the body responsible for successfully bringing World Cup 2022 in Qatar to fruition. He told The Washington Times it didn't have to be this way. "Our bid for the World Cup was always intended to be an Arab Middle Eastern bid."

According to Al Thawadi, originally the intent of the Qatar World Cup was to create an integrated economy with neighbors like Saudi Arabia, UAE and

Bahrain. Practice venues for some teams could have been stationed at various places throughout the Middle East region, bringing not only teams, but bringing their fans as well. Hotels, restaurants and tourist destinations would have thrived for the entire region before, during and after the World Cup. Worldwide media coverage would have covered everywhere the fans were, in effect, creating billions of dollars worth of global marketing to hundreds of millions of people worldwide.

FIFA even explored expanding the World Cup from 32 teams to 48. The result would have been additional World Cup games being played in neighboring nations, which would clearly be a net positive for everyone.

The ongoing Gulf Crisis however, put an end to the expanded format idea. In May FIFA issued the following statement: "In line with the conclusions of the feasibility study approved by the FIFA Council at its last meeting, FIFA and Qatar have jointly explored all possibilities to increase the number of participant teams from 32 to 48 teams by involving neighboring countries at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022." The statement continued, "Following a thorough and comprehensive consultation process with the involvement of all the relevant

stakeholders, it was concluded that under the current circumstances such a proposal could not be made now."

Al Thawadi expressed disappointment that the blockading countries are putting politics ahead of the celebration of sport. "The World Cup is for the people, not governments. It is a chance to showcase culture and history."

Despite the tensions in the region, the Secretary General sees World Cup 2022 as having the potential to be a transformational moment. In an odd way, the challenges caused by the embargo have brought out the best in everyone involved in preparations, from the biggest companies to individual workers. He even invokes what is commonly known as the American spirit. "This effort represents and embodies the American Dream, promoting entrepreneurship, innovative spirit and a never say never approach," then he adds with a laugh, "We are the Mighty Ducks" a light hearted reference to the series of Disney movies where a rag tag group of youth hockey players overcome adversity to pull off a great victory.

The adversity may be very different than that faced by the Disney kids, but Hassan Al Thawadi clearly is hoping the fairy tale ending is the same.



Blockade doesn't slow World Cup 2022 plans

DOHA, Qatar — Officials here are working overtime to prevent a bitter feud with Qatar's Persian Gulf neighbors from spilling over into a critical arena: the soccer pitch.

Organizers insist in interviews that the blockade imposed by Saudi Arabia and other Arab states since June 2017 has had no lasting negative impact on preparations for a centerpiece of their nation's rise on the global stage: playing host to the World Cup, the sport's quadrennial showcase, in 2022.

"The blockade has not changed any of our plans or timelines," said Fatma Al-nuaimi, head spokeswoman for the Qatari outfit managing preparations for the global extravaganza that brings with it dozens of national teams and as many as a half-million fans from around the globe for a month of competition.

Officials with FIFA, the soccer world's organizing body, say they are optimistic that the diplomatic crisis dividing the region will be resolved by 2022.

But while construction is ahead of schedule on a slate of stadiums in Doha, some here say they are worried about an entirely different kind of crisis when Qatar becomes the first Arab nation ever to host the event.

"I've got to be honest," said one British resident in the Qatari capital, who asked not to be named. "How the heck is this conservative Islamic country, where booze is only allowed at high-end hotels, going to manage all the drunken Brits who come for the World Cup?"

The Qataris say they aren't worried.

"We'll be ready," said one official, a member of the nation's ruling royal family, who laughed out loud when asked about the concerns over coffee on a

recent morning in Doha.

"We're well aware of this issue and are taking steps to prepare," said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, adding that Qatari Ministry of Interior officials have traveled to the United Kingdom for special training with the Manchester police force on "how deal with British soccer hooligans and game day shenanigans."

On a more official note, Ms. Al-nuaimi said that "alcohol is not part of our culture, but hospitality is, and alcohol will be available in designated areas during the tournament."

Ms. Al-nuaimi said Qatar "sent an observation team" to European soccer championships, where on at least one occasion the chaos grew so wild between gangs of drunken fans that riot police had to break out tear gas and water cannons to halt the violence. Ms. Al-nuaimi said Doha is working closely with Interpol on security preparations in general.

In a word, the arenas being constructed are eye-popping, and the most magnificent may be the recently inaugurated Al Wakrah Stadium. It was the brainchild of Zaha Hadid, the renowned Iraqi-British architect who died in 2016. Her followers say the stadium's look was inspired by the sails of traditional Arab sailing vessels known as dhows.

Holding the soccer championship in a sweltering climate presents logistical challenges of its own. As for heat affecting the players and the international hordes of fans who'll descend on the country to watch the matches? Not to worry, organizers said. Al Wakrah, along with several other stadiums, will be fully air conditioned to keep players and fans protected from outdoor temperatures that can climb as high as 120 degrees.

The Super Bowl vs. The World Cup

Every February Americans gather around their televisions to celebrate Super Bowl Sunday. The Super Bowl, the NFL's Championship game, is the single biggest TV event in the United States. Nearly every household tunes in.

Betting is completely off the chain. Have a hunch which team will win the coin toss? Place a bet. How much time will have elapsed when the first points are scored? Place a bet. Food, money and good fellowship are all in ample supply. Most Americans believe The Super Bowl is the biggest sporting event on earth, but is it?

In a word, no.

The biggest television audience for a Super Bowl was the 2015 match up between the New England Patriots and Seattle Seahawks. That game drew 114.4 million viewers in the U.S., and an estimated 30-50 million internationally. Big numbers for sure, but they pale in comparison to viewers of The World Cup.

During the 2014 World Cup final in Brazil, more than one billion people tuned in to see Germany knock off Argentina. Among those viewers, a staggering 695 million watched at least 20 consecutive minutes.

On the money front, the Super Bowl generates an estimated \$620 million of the NFL's revenue. That one game helps make the NFL the leading money maker among all professional sports leagues. The NFL's total for the full 2017 season was more than \$14 billion.

Although the World Cup lasts just a month and features only 64 games, its 2018 revenue is estimated to have exceeded \$5 billion. In one month. That's more than \$78 million generated per World Cup game.

Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser

One of the most influential women on the planet

Forbes magazine has recognized Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser as one of the most influential women on the planet. The wife of the Father Emir of Qatar and the mother of the current Emir, Her Highness has had a direct hand in setting education and social reforms in her country for more than two decades and her efforts are now helping bring education to children in the most unlikely corners of the globe.

Sheikha Moza plays a key role in supporting the Qatar's National Vision – a far-reaching agenda to transform the country into a robust, knowledge-based society by 2030. She is highly active on the international stage, spearheading projects to promote education and human development not only in her own nation, but throughout the world. Her own Educate A Child initiative, which she launched at the WISE conference in Doha last November, is already helping to provide quality primary education to over half a million children in some of the most challenging circumstances and regions of the world. In January 2016, Sheikha Moza was appointed as a United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Advocate, through which she committed to advocating for access to quality education around the world.

Her Highness is no figurehead leader either. Her reputation as a hands-on, active participant in literally every endeavor she undertakes is legendary

Among Sheikha Moza's numerous international projects is Education Above All (EAA), a global initiative that aims to build a worldwide movement that fosters development, with a particular focus on areas affected by poverty, conflict and disaster, the needs of children, and the empowerment of youth and women. Her other projects include the Silatech initiative to address the growing challenge of youth employment in the Middle East and North Africa.

Domestically, she serves as Chairperson of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), a private non-profit organization founded in 1995. Its flagship project is Education City, which serves as a hub of academic excellence



and houses branch campuses of renowned international universities and institutions. QF is also engaged in numerous scientific research and economic and social development projects. She also chairs Sidra Medicine, a new, dynamic training and research

hospital that is envisaged to become a leading institution for women and children's specialty care.

Her Highness is no figurehead leader either. Her reputation as a hands-on, active participant in literally every endeavor she undertakes is

legendary. Ban Ki-moon, former secretary-general of the United Nations and co-chair of the Ban Ki-moon Center for Global Citizens said "Her Highness Sheikha Moza is so passionate in leading the campaign for education".

In a region of the world often questioned about its commitment to women's rights, it is a woman leading the way for social reform. Simeon Kerr and Roula Kharaf described her in the Financial Times this way "Sheikha Moza, matriarch of the modern Gulf"

Among Sheikha Moza's many honors are the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy and the George Bush Award for Excellence in Public Service in 2013. In June 2009, she was inducted into the Academie des Beaux Arts de l'Institut de France (Academy of Fine Arts of the Institute of France), the prestigious French society that generates awareness of the arts through education and helps develop artistic relationships on an international level. In 2007, Sheikha Moza was presented the prestigious Chatham House Award for her contributions to improving international relations.



Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development

Working towards the future

The Qatar Foundation is a non-profit organization made up of more than 50 entities working in education, research, and community development. For over two decades, Qatar Foundation has been driving regional innovation and entrepreneurship, fostering social development and a culture of lifelong learning, and preparing Qatar's brightest minds to tackle tomorrow's biggest challenges.

The Qatar Foundation is quite sure their nation's future lies in unlocking the most precious resource of all—human potential.

Education City, the flagship initiative, is a campus that spans more than 12 square kilometers and hosts branch campuses of some of the world's leading educational institutions, a homegrown university, and other research, scholastic, and community centers.

What is QF's approach to education?

The QF team explains it as a multi-generational approach. Their 'cycle of education' offers learning opportunities from as young as six months all the way up to undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral level.

Commitment to Innovation

QF's biennial World Innovation

Summit for Health (WISH) and World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) create a global community of diverse learners and educators and connect them through effective and collaborative experiences.

and its stable, diverse environment – openness; tolerance and understanding; cultural interaction; and the free exchange of ideas and perspectives – are more important and relevant than ever. The blockade has placed QF's

For over two decades, Qatar Foundation has been driving regional innovation and entrepreneurship, fostering social development and a culture of lifelong learning, and preparing Qatar's brightest minds to tackle tomorrow's biggest challenges.

Qatar Science and Technology Park is building a robust startup ecosystem in Doha with close ties to Silicon Valley. Qatar Foundation has a partnership with leading ecosystem players including US venture firm 500 Startups. For the past two years the partnership has identified promising startups across the MENA region and provided support and mentoring.

Has the blockade impacted the efforts of the Qatar Foundation?

Almost two years on from its imposition, the blockade of Qatar has neither hindered nor deterred QF's mission. Instead, it has demonstrated how values that are at the core of QF

role as a beacon of knowledge and positivity into even sharper focus.

At Qatar Foundation, education comes first. They believe education is a human right that should be guaranteed for students of all nationalities, regardless of surrounding circumstances and political situations. These ideals are precious, particularly at a time of regional turbulence.

The impact of the blockade on their students has been minimal, and where individual students have been affected, QF has made every effort to support them and ensure their education continues uninterrupted. The blockade has had no impact on operations or future plans.

Since the blockade began, QF has opened two new schools, the Qatar National Library, and Sidra Medicine, a pioneering hospital for women and children that is also conducting vital medical research. In 2018 an assistant professor at Weill Cornell working at Sidra Medicine pioneered an innovative diabetes management protocol offering faster and safer access to diabetes treatment.

WISH 2018 – the latest biennial gathering of the world's healthcare experts, brought together by QF initiative the World Innovation Summit for Health – attracted nearly 2,200 delegates, making it the most well-attended edition of the summit to date.

The 2019 edition of the Arab Innovation Academy, hosted by QF member Qatar Science & Technology Park, brought together 160 young innovators, 25 speakers, and 37 mentors and investors – collectively representing 30 nationalities. Its debut edition, in 2018, drew more than 100 aspiring technology entrepreneurs from Qatar, Algeria, Lebanon, Oman, Tunisia, Morocco, and Jordan.

In 2018, QF hosted approximately 40 major local and international events, collectively attended by more than 55,000 people.



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Sidra Medicine

Women and children's health center

If you or a loved one has ever had a serious medical issue, you are familiar with the helpless feeling that can overwhelm you. Conversely you may also know the comfort and confidence that washes over you when you arrive at a world-class health care facility for medical care. Whether it is the Mayo Clinic, Sloan Kettering or Cleveland Clinic, the hope and optimism that sprouts simply by being there and interacting with experts in their respective medical fields is hard to describe, but if you've experienced it, impossible to forget.

Add another name to that world-class list. Sidra Medicine in Doha, Qatar is ranked among the most advanced research hospitals in the world with cutting-edge technology, modern medical equipment and sophisticated laboratories to nurture innovation and clinical advancement.

Sidra Medicine has more than 4,000 employees including more than 1,400 nurses, over 650 Doctors, more than 1,000 allied health professionals and administration and support staff of over 1,000 people. It features multiple pioneering programs.

The Child Advocacy Program provides resources and a support network to help protect children from abuse or neglect at home and in the community. It also includes a free telephone helpline for children, families, caregivers and the



community to report any form of child abuse or neglect they may have witnessed or that may have been inflicted on them if they are a child.

The Women's Perinatal Mental Health clinic is based on a patient and family centered system that promotes recovery and wellness for women. It provides essential outpatient, consultation and liaison services for women during pregnancy and the postpartum period.

The Sidra Medicine Heart Center is a flagship program and is positioned to

become a leading center in the Middle East region for patients suffering from congenital heart disease. Under the visionary leadership of Prof. Ziyad M. Hijazi, the Center boasts a world-renowned team, cutting edge equipment and facilities and a best-in-class model that delivers comprehensive "one-stop" care for patients.

The Sidra Medicine Specialized Pediatric Robotic Surgery program was launched to perform and instruct its pediatric surgical doctors on the latest surgical techniques. The program

is designed to ensure Sidra Medicine practitioners can offer the best and the safest medical care to patients in Qatar and the Middle East region.

The Qatar Poison Center Helpline is a free call center service that provides poison management and treatment advice to the general public and hospitals. It accepts calls in English and Arabic seven days a week.

The Research branch of Sidra Medicine serves as a hub for biomedical research in Qatar. Its aim is to advance the understanding of epidemiology and mechanisms of diseases, develop preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic tools, and improve the health outcomes of the women, young people and children of Qatar. The center's research teams are currently working on several research programs that align with national priorities and the healthcare needs of the country, including autism, maternal fetal health, diabetes and genetic disorders that are affecting the local population.

Sidra Medicine embraces best practice medical education, innovative biomedical and clinical research and discovery, and exceptional patient and family focused care. This unique combination makes Sidra Medicine one of the handful of healthcare organizations in the world that embeds the concept of personalized medicine into its very ethos of treatment and care.

Education City

The world's finest universities with campuses in Doha

It's that time of year again. The time of year when young faces proudly wearing mortar board caps and flowing gowns celebrate their graduation from whatever school best served their scholastic interest. Some studied to be physicians at Weill Cornell Medicine. Some dream of a future in engineering after completing their course work at Texas A & M. Perhaps it was the communication program at Northwestern that captured their effort. Some students look forward to a career in public policy after their training at Georgetown University. Proud parents and siblings smile and cheer with pride.

These are not however, students on American campuses. Each of the graduates mentioned above have completed their studies at Education City in Doha, Qatar.

The Qatar Foundation holds an annual convocation ceremony for graduates from the top-notch educational programs based at Education City, including Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Texas A&M University at Qatar, Northwestern University in Qatar, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar, Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Georgetown University in Qatar, UCL Qatar and HEC Paris in Qatar. The 2019 Convocation ceremony celebrating their success saw a total of 787 students graduates.

Among those graduates are 378 Qataris and 409 non-Qataris. 484 graduates were women and 303 were men. A total of 70 nationalities were represented, showing the opportunity for everyone to thrive in this all-inclusive environment of educational excellence.

More than 20 years ago the idea of Education City was conceived to create a place of opportunities for all. Today, the thriving campus is home to 9 universities, 11 schools, and a student body where women represent the majority. In fact, female students in Qatar are far likelier to enroll in traditionally male dominated STEM fields than their counterparts in the West.

This is no accident.

Education City is the flagship project of Qatar Foundation. It has pushed for a movement of gender equality by providing educational opportunities for promising young women and men from preschool all the way to postgraduate studies.

The introduction of Education City has not just spurred new creative industries in Qatar, it has challenged societal expectations of the kinds of careers in which women can thrive. The extraordinary statistics of female enrollment in the



field of engineering in Qatar are just one example worth exploring.

At Texas A&M University at Qatar, 70 percent of female undergraduate students are Qatari, while women account for 45.7 percent of the total student body. The latter figure is more than twice the US national average of women in engineering (20.9 percent) and that of female enrollment in engineering at Texas A&M's main campus (21.9 percent).

"This a young country and it is clear that there is a push to encourage indigenous engineers, both male and female," stated Texas A&M at Qatar educator Dr Bilal Mansoor. "Those of us who have been here for a long time, have seen the investment in Education City and the changes it has brought to the country." She feels that Qatar presents a unique model of female empowerment.

"These levels of opportunity have meant that female students don't have to leave their family behind and study overseas if they want to pursue their chosen field."

When Northwestern University and Georgetown University first opened

their branch campuses in Qatar, they focused on offering degrees from their most renowned schools: the Medill School of Journalism and the Walsh School of Foreign Service, respectively. In the US, these schools are located hundreds of miles away, but in Education City, they are only a few feet apart and offer joint programs.

Shakeeb Asrar was in his second year at Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q) when he developed an interest in politics and chose to take classes from the neighboring Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q). Upon his graduation in 2017, Asrar earned a degree in Journalism from Northwestern with a minor in Media and Politics in collaboration with Georgetown's Walsh School of Foreign Service.

"I wanted to take classes in government structures, policy-making, or diplomacy—factors that greatly impact media these days," Asrar said. "For me to take such classes at Georgetown while being a Northwestern student was a perfect blend of the two worlds."

This collaborative approach is

characteristic of Education City, a 12 square kilometer campus that houses branch campuses of six top-ranked American colleges, two European institutes, and one homegrown research university. Today, the nine universities in Education City that cater to more than 3,000 students are located within walking distance of one another. Housed in built-for-purpose campuses, the university programs range from undergraduate offerings in media, international affairs, business and computer science, to doctorates in medicine, and post-graduate programs in engineering and arts. All programs carry the same academic rigor and repute of those at their main campuses.

While cross-registration of classes is not a feature limited only to Education City—several universities such as Harvard and MIT offer similar opportunities—the close proximity of these institutions in Qatar allows students from both universities to interact more closely and helps academic advisors to meet regularly to ensure alignment of programs.

According to Scott Curtis, associate professor and director of the Communication Program at NU-Q, "being in a set-up like Education City opened up opportunities for us to work with other universities, and to build collaborative programs which are beneficial to our students."

"In terms of the partnership with GU-Q, we already had the green light from our home university [in Evanston]," Curtis explained. "They expect us to be innovative and entrepreneurial in our teaching methods, and recognized that NU-Q has more similarities with GU-Q than with many of the other EC campuses. Both universities share a social scientific and humanistic approach, and a similar outlook."

Qatar Fund for Development

Providing humanitarian assistance worldwide

The State of Qatar developed its National Vision 2030 as a framework that encapsulates its vision for the human, social and economic development of the country.

Significant importance was attached to contributing to international peace through development and humanitarian assistance.

In a world where conflicts, instability, and other man-made crises and natural disasters affect millions of people; where many lives are lost to treatable and preventable diseases; and where children are unable to realize their full potential due to limitations such as lack of access to education, primary health coverage and water, and sanitation; the State of Qatar is committed to acting as a change-maker hand in hand with bilateral and multilateral partners to address these challenges. The development arm of the country, Qatar Fund for Development, was established to play a central role in advancing the Agenda 2030 of the Sustainable Development Goals and providing humanitarian assistance to populations across borders abiding by the principles of impartiality and neutrality.

In response to the different natural disasters that swept the Americas in recent years, the State of Qatar has provided sizable humanitarian aid to mitigate the destructions caused by these disasters in different countries, including the United States of America, South America and the Caribbean Islands. In 2017 alone, urgent interventions with a commitment of more than US \$14 million were made for countries that were hit by natural disasters, mainly targeting segments that were severely affected and supporting post-recovery activities in the Bahamas, Belize, Haiti, Ecuador, Chile, Antigua and Barbuda, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Dominican Republic and St. Kitts and Nevis.

Qatar Katrina Fund

When in 2005, the Louisiana city of New Orleans suffered the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, Qatar provided one of the largest single recovery packages to New Orleans. The \$100 million grant reached educational, health, humanitarian and religious organizations. Some of the key recipients included:

- Xavier University of Louisiana, the only historically African American Catholic college in the US, which received US \$17.5 million donations.
- The Children's Hospital, which received US\$ 5.3 million donations – the biggest gift the hospital had ever received.
- Numerous Religious institutions and places of worship, including Catholic churches, mosques, a Hindu temple, and a synagogue.
- The Qatar Embassy in Washington DC also supported US arts and education programs affected by Katrina.



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Qatar Harvey Fund

In August 2017, the catastrophic hurricane Harvey hit the United States of America, becoming one of the costliest natural disasters in the country's history. In the immediate aftermath, the State of Qatar established the Qatar Harvey Fund, pledging US\$ 30 million for the relief and reconstruction efforts in Texas, to help rebuild and develop the impacted areas. \$5 million were allocated to the Texas Reconstruction Fund, and another \$5 million to the Hurricane Relief Fund. Other grants were allocated to the City of Houston Mayor's Fund to reduce homelessness, Harris County's Riverside General Hospital, Wesley A.M.E. Church for hurricane damage recovery and "Qatar Veterans Fund" in partnership with the Bob Woodruff Foundation.

The Qatar Harvey fund also provided a scholarship program to the tune of US\$ 3 million to assist students who were forced to withdraw from universities following the hurricane. The scholarship program will help

Qatar Irma Fund

Following the catastrophic hurricane that hit Florida in August 2017, the State of Qatar allocated an amount of \$30 million for the relief and construction efforts in Florida.



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FUND

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university students during the fall 2019 and spring 2020 semesters with unmet costs of attendance such as tuition and fees, room and board, books and educational supplies, and transportation expenses.

Other programs supported by the Qatar Harvey Fund included the Texas Boys and Girls Club. Texas clubs are part of a national non-profit organization, whose board includes former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and actor and director Denzel Washington, the club aims to enable low-income young people of to reach their full potential through several programs in personal and leadership development, education and career development, health and life skills, arts, sports, fitness, and other entertainment programs. Clubs in Texas were affected by Hurricane Harvey, and a budget of US\$ 622,627 was needed to restore and maintain five clubs.

Qatar Haiti Fund

(Comprehensive reconstruction

program for Haiti)

The State of Qatar supported multiple sectors through different programs in Haiti. In 2010, following the catastrophic earthquake that hit the Republic of Haiti, the United Nations Donor Conference concerning the relief and reconstruction of the Republic of Haiti held in New York City urged donors to pledge in support of Haiti. The State of Qatar pledged \$20 million for the comprehensive reconstruction of the deteriorating health system, as well as support for the housing and education sectors.

The State of Qatar also partnered with Haven Foundation to help families who suffered in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy by providing support for food and housing for one year. A grant of US\$ 2 million was also provided to increase the provision of health care for people in remote areas of Haiti through four mobile health clinics. The project has been completed and disbursed in full. Furthermore, the Fund supported the Albert Schweitzer Hospital in 2012, with an \$ 87,000 fund to train nurses and purchase equipment for the hospital.

In addition to many projects that

were implemented to date, several projects that were recently funded include:

Reconstruction of classrooms and the principal laboratory at the Faculty of Sciences at the State University of Haiti in downtown Port-au-Prince.

The Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) provided an allocation of over US\$ 7 million to the Qatari based NGO Education Above All to support the Educate A Child initiative. The project which aimed at increasing access to equitable, quality primary education, was completed in November 2018, and supported the enrollment of 53,059 children into primary education in Haiti, in addition to the training of 179 school principals and 18 supervisors.

In 2016, the Qatar Fund for Development and Qatar Red Crescent Society partnered to help victims of the Hurricane Matthew with a grant of US \$500,000.

In 2018, the Qatar Fund for Development signed a contribution agreement with the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, with a grant of US \$1.5 million to advance the efforts of the UN in Haiti to eradicate cholera and improve access to health care for people in Haiti.

Humanitarian assistance to those affected by El Nino in Peru

In 2017, Qatar Fund for Development provided a US \$1 million grant to Government of the Republic of Peru, for humanitarian assistance and relief to those affected by El Nino.

Assistance to earthquake victims in Ecuador

In 2017, a 7.8 Mw earthquake struck northern Ecuador causing the death of more than 600 people, with over 6000 people severely injured and over one million directly or indirectly affected by the earthquake. In partnership with the Government of Ecuador, QFFD contributed a US\$1 million emergency relief intervention fund to aid the affected population in Ecuador.

Helping reconstruction efforts in Chile

Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD) signed a US\$ 5 million agreement with the Chilean government to reconstruct the city of Santa Olga and the surrounding areas that were damaged due to a forest fire that ravaged the entire town of Santa Olga, destroying buildings, farms, and livestock.

Emerging media in Qatar

It's well known that the Al Jazeera Network is headquartered in Doha, Qatar. Launched in 1996, the sometimes controversial network broadcasts to tens of millions of Arabic viewers worldwide, much to the delight of Arab viewers around the globe but to the chagrin of certain state governments who prefer to deliver their own carefully crafted propaganda to their citizens. Saudi Arabia is among the biggest critics of Al Jazeera.

Al Jazeera Arabic has been recognized for excellence worldwide, garnering awards in recent years from The German Foundation, ProMax Africa, and the Freedom of Speech And Expression Medal in the Netherlands.

Perhaps even more impressive is the dominance Al Jazeera English has shown at the New York Festivals World's Best TV & Film awards. It has been named Broadcaster of the Year three consecutive years. In 2017 AJE also won five Gold Medals, 14 Silver Medals and 7 bronze medals for various programs and presentations.

Much less well known but enjoying enormous growth is AJ+.

AJ+ is a digital platform, distributing news and information via social media to a much younger demographic worldwide. The delivery of information is decidedly different and definitely designed to appeal to youth. Using tools like humor and graphic art, AJ+ takes people out of the usual way of telling stories. Some stories are delivered with music, some with poetry, some with science and others with philosophy.

Taking a page from their Western counterparts, AJ+ has established a weekly news program featuring a handsome, young, irreverent male host who makes no bones about mocking the issues of the day.

Managing Director Dima Khatib proudly points out how AJ+ shatters nearly every stereotype of the Arabic world. "52% of our employees are women. Women share 50/50 on leadership at AJ+. By making the woman's perspective an essential part of our process the result is more female engagement."

The numbers back her up. 61% of Facebook engagement is with women. Female engagement in both France and Mexico hovers around 60%. The numbers are solid virtually everywhere.

AJ+ has more than 45 nationalities on staff, setting it up to succeed in all corners of the globe. AJ+ is available in English, Arabic, French and Spanish. They have 12 million Facebook followers and over a million Twitter users in the US alone. Not only are their numbers big, their followers are engaged. They have more comments



On a more global scale, DFI has been able to play a sponsorship role on 488 films with filmmakers from 71 different countries. Their commitment to providing opportunity to Arab filmmakers has developed a huge following in the industry.

and more participation, even including virtual fights, than nearly all their competitors.

AJ+ Arabic has the highest growth among competitors and the highest interaction rate in the last 12 months. They also have the highest follower growth on Instagram in the last 12 months.

Khatib credits the amazing success to a simple formula. "We don't tell people how it is. We don't know more than they do. We simply provide information on the ground. It's the new world order of media."

Another surprising area that is expanding in Qatar is film.

The Doha Film Institute (DFI) was established to provide Qatari talent with a platform for storytelling through the medium of film, and the opportunity to develop skills and professional careers in the film industry, among other things.

In 2018 DFI clearly accomplished their goal. Locally they were able to assist 870 individuals. Among them were professionals, aspiring filmmakers and participants in the DFI youth programs.



On a more global scale, DFI has been able to play a sponsorship role on 488 films with filmmakers from 71 different countries. Their commitment to providing opportunity to Arab filmmakers has developed a huge following in the industry. In May DFI announced 37 grants for more films. Those films were chosen from over 750 applications for grants and represent 28 countries.

The criteria is simple. Applicants must be a first or second time filmmaker. There is no set format, meaning an individual's project may be fiction, a documentary or something completely different.

When it was pointed out to Fatma Hassan Alremaihi, Chief Executive Officer of the Doha Film Institute, that in the West aspiring filmmakers can sometimes intentionally be very provoking with their content, she assured The Washington Times that the creative spirit is no different in Doha. "You will find the same provocative nature here.

Some individuals want to shake things up." Despite the traditional culture in Qatar, the CEO says "As an institute, we do not censor - not even shocking or provoking filming."

One of the essential elements in DFI's growth has been Qumra. It is six days of meetings, actions and feedback from those in and those interested in being in, the film industry. Alremaihi loves the participatory nature of Qumra. "Everyone is invited and everyone can participate. From 8 years old on up, not only can you attend, you can serve as a juror. All week every participant has the opportunity to talk to talent, discuss films that are shown, and ultimately to have the final decision in judging the films."

The Doha Film Institute is succeeding at every level. DFI is the only cultural organization in the Middle East/North Africa region to have had four co-financed films in the Official Selection/Competition of the Cannes Film Festival to date.



Qatar's diverse population

Melting pot of knowledge and culture

America is often referred to as the great melting pot because of its wildly diverse population. The blend of cultures, history and knowledge from all over the world has been a great blessing. It is oft said there is no where else on earth where so many have come to improve their lives.

Qatar may give the United States a run for its money.

Qatar is a small, wealthy and successful country. Its population of 2.7 million places it as only the 143rd most populous nation on earth. The most fascinating part of that number however, is that less than 15% of the population is native Qatari. The overwhelming majority is from somewhere else. Official estimates say 24% are Indian, 16% from Nepal, 13% are Arab, 11% Filipino and 5% each from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The Qatar workforce is made up of over 100 different nationalities.

Every day, thousands of job seekers and travelers from every corner of the globe flock to this Arab nation. Qatar's Prime Minister HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa al Thani introduced free 96-hour transit visa for all nationalities and on-arrival visa for people of 80 countries in 2017 with the goal of becoming the most open nation in the Gulf.

The diversity is a source of great pride. Whether visiting a government office, chatting about World Cup preparations with the office of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy or visiting the Al Jazeera Network, it will only be a matter of minutes before you're told how many nationalities are represented in their organization. The number is nearly always over 40 and often in excess of 70.



Some will assume that it is the labor force powering the tremendous growth in Qatar that makes up the bulk of expat workers. To a large extent they would be right. With better pay, better minimum living standards and a nearly crime free community, people come from near and far in hopes of creating a better life for themselves.

But Qatar is also home to a large assortment of the world's finest experts. Experts in engineering, communications, marketing, architecture, education, healthcare and infrastructure among others are all welcomed from literally every continent. Qatar has an appetite for the best. As they grow and develop at a rapid pace, leadership has realized that in order to assure the long term success and prosperity Qatar need not reinvent the wheel. The Chairman of

Qatar Airways for example, has great vision, but he also has assembled great executive talent. The gentleman in charge of Al Jazeera English is a product of the BBC. The team organizing World Cup 2022 has experience from some of the world's biggest sporting events. Not only does Qatar recruit great talent, they welcome it, nurture it and learn from it.

Though two-thirds of Qatar's population is Muslim, the free exercise of religion is both allowed and supported by the government. 14% of the population is Christian, another 14% is Hindu and 3% Buddhist. The balance is made up of Jewish faiths, folk religion, other faiths and those who aren't attached to any religion.

In 2003 the Father Emir decreed open religious rights. In 2005 the Qatar government leased a 99 acre site to

Christian denominations. By 2009 there was a ribbon cutting and the first church was open since Islam became well established in the region in the 7th century. On Christmas Eve the first year, more than 15,000 Catholics showed up for Midnight Mass. The church holds 2,700.

In the ten years since, the 99 acres has become home to eight churches, all on the same campus, yet all stand alone structures. The Interfaith Dialog Center not only nurtures a positive relationship between the various churches, it also helps Christians and others communicate with the government. Formally known as the Religious Center, some of the faithful prefer to refer to the area as Church City.

It is estimated there are more than 100,000 Catholics in Doha and more than 50,000 Inter-Denominational Christian Church members. The Greek Orthodox Church is on campus as are the Coptic Christians and Pentecostals. The Anglican Church not only serves its own faithful, it opens its doors 8 other small traditional Christian churches and 100 independent charismatic groups. Services are delivered in multiple languages.

Between 20,000 and 30,000 worshippers flood Church City on any given weekend. On Christmas and Easter that number tops 50,000.

One of the ministers, marveling at Qatar's freedom of religious rights and the government support was particularly thankful for the annual meetings with the Emir. He considered it a great privilege.

Whether its research, education, work or religion, Qatar clearly embraces and encourages diversity among the people living there.

Celebrating a rich history

National Museum of Qatar

The National Museum of Qatar is dedicated to bringing to life the unique story of Qatar and its people. It actively gives voice to the nation's rich heritage and culture and demonstrates their extensive network of ties with other nations and people around the world. Designed as a vibrant and immersive space, diverse communities can come together and experience Qatar's past, present and future.

The complex form of the desert rose, found in Qatar's arid desert regions, inspired the striking design of the new museum building, conceived by French architect Jean Nouvel.

The new building embraces Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim Al-Thani's original palace—his family home and seat of the government for 25 years. This nationally significant building has been carefully restored and conserved, so that it can be enjoyed by visitors and future generations to come.

The story of Qatar unfolds across 11 striking galleries, all employing innovative approaches to storytelling. Each gallery provides a unique perspective across time and connects visitors to lives lived between land and sea. All the senses will be triggered through a creative combination of sounds including music and oral histories, visually through film and archival images and even by smell through evocative aromas.

The Palace of Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim bin Mohamed Al-Thani — the largest artifact on show at the National Museum — has received extensive restoration and protection. Built near the shoreline and susceptible to cracking, this historic landmark has been restored and refurbished several times since its construction in 1906. Now with new concrete piles supporting the structure and the water table removed, further damage can be avoided.

The Museum of Islamic Art

While the National Museum of Qatar tells a nation's personal story, The Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) represents Islamic art from three continents over 1,400 years. MIA is stunning representation of Qatar Museums which, under the leadership of its Chairperson H.E. Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, is transforming the State of Qatar into a cultural capital of the Middle East.

MIA houses a collection of artistic objects gathered from around the Islamic world with a mission to serve the cultural, artistic and social needs of our visitors. MIA is not a religious institution however it does have prayer rooms and ablution facilities inside the museum building for all Muslim visitors.

The Museum of Islamic Art's vision

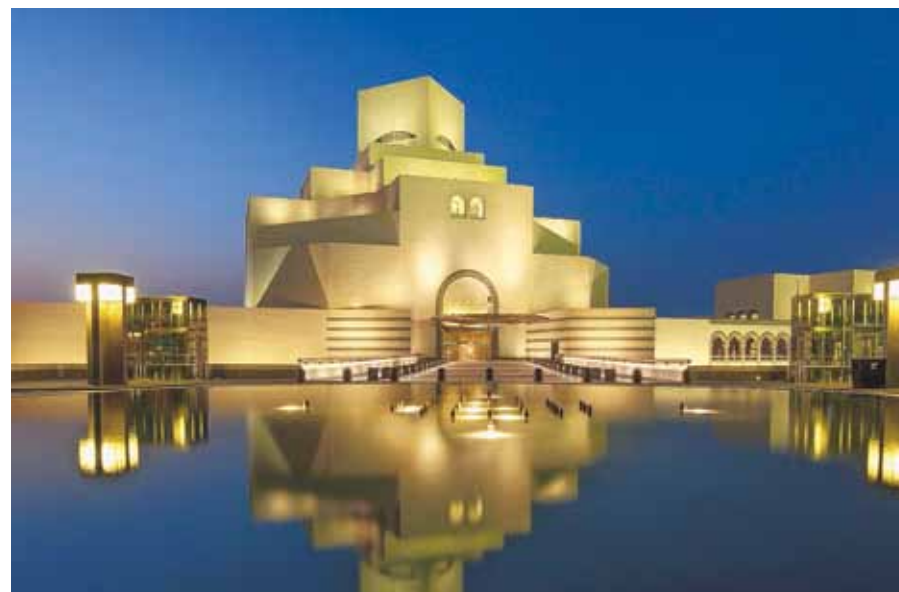


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statement aspires for MIA to be recognized as the center of knowledge, dialogue and inspiration that illuminates the art of Islamic civilizations, opening minds and shaping the future.

The museum building has rapidly become an iconic feature of the Doha landscape. Standing alone on reclaimed land, the building draws much

influence from ancient Islamic architecture, notably the Ibn Tulun Mosque in Cairo.

Designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect I.M. Pei, the Museum is comprised of a main building with an adjacent education wing connected by a large central courtyard. The main building rises five-stories, topped by

a high domed atrium within a central tower.

The cream-colored limestone captures the changes in light and shade during the day.

The interior is no less spectacular. The center piece of the atrium is a curved double staircase leading up to the first floor. Above it floats an ornate circular metal chandelier echoing the curve of the staircase.

An oculus, at the top of the atrium, captures and reflects patterned light within the faceted dome. The five-story 45-meter tall window on the north side gives spectacular panoramic views across the bay.

The geometric patterns of the Islamic world adorn the spaces, including the ceilings of the elevators. A variety of textures and materials from wood and stone has created a unique environment for the museum's stunning collections.

Qatar is recognized globally for carefully planning and developing for the future. It's no small irony that they also have set the standard for celebrating the rich history of not only their own unique history, but that of the entire Islamic world.



Doha Forum

Annual gathering of world leaders

Since the year 2000, Doha Forum has been bringing top policy-makers and diplomats from across the globe under one roof to discuss world's pressing challenges.

The Forum, according to official website of Doha Forum, is shaping policy in an interconnected world. "During the last few decades, both policy practices and diplomatic discourse have become more dynamic."

Last year at its 18th edition the Doha Forum promoted #Diplomacy, #Dialogue and #Diversity as the core of their vision as they tackle the world's most pressing problems.

Doha Forum announced in May it will return for a 19th edition this December 14-15, under the Patronage of HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of Qatar. The annual policy gathering will be held under the theme 'Reimagining Governance in a Multipolar World'.

Her Excellency Lolwah Al Khater, Spokesperson for Ministry of Foreign Affairs Qatar, stated: "We live in a world undergoing massive shifts in power, politics and trade. In the midst of break-throughs in technology, issues of migration, and increasingly complex



security challenges, a new format of dialogue is needed to forge a consensus. I look forward to welcoming leaders from around the world to another series of diverse, inclusive and action-oriented conversations."

The 2019 Forum will tackle key

themes including; Trends and Technology; Trade and Investment; Human Capital and Inequality; Security, Cyber Governance, and Defense; International Organizations, Civil Society and Non-State Actors; and Culture and Identity.

Last year's edition brought together

international decision-makers, heads of state, ministers, business executives and advocates to examine policy that can lead the world to a better future. Key speakers included His Highness and President of Ecuador, Lenín Moreno; UN Secretary General, António Guterres; Iranian Foreign Minister, Mo-hamed Javad Zarif; Nobel Laureate, Nadia Murad; Japanese Foreign Minister, Taro Kono; President of the United Nations General Assembly, María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés; Foreign Minister of Romania, Teodor-Viorel Meleşcanu; and H.E. Wolfgang Ischinger Chairman, Munich Security Conference.

"Doha Forum reaches out to high level policy makers, government leaders, private industry representatives, civil society, and non-governmental organizations with the belief that diversity in thought will enhance how we deal with our collective challenges," says the official website of Doha Forum.

This edition will also see the launch of the Doha Forum Award, given for the first time in 2019 to an individual or organization that demonstrates outstanding achievements rooted in the core values of Doha Forum—dialogue, diplomacy and diversity. The winner will be announced at Doha Forum this December.



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Qatar's economy is red hot

Ranked 3rd of 63 countries in economic performance

Qatar's economic performance is so impressive it beats out nearly every other country on earth according to the International Competitiveness Yearbook 2019. The report is published annually by the Switzerland-based International Institute for Management Development (IMD). The small Gulf nation ranked third (3) out more than 60 countries.

The assessment of economic competitiveness in this report is based on a set of statistical data and indicators from several local and international organizations. It also takes into account the views of businessmen from more than 200 companies who presented their candid views about the business environment and competitiveness of the Qatari economy.

The annual assessment checks on economic factors in 63 developed countries worldwide. It then breaks out ratings for each country in four categories, Economic Performance, Government Efficiency, Efficiency of the Business Sector and Infrastructure. Finally it tallies a combination of all categories for an overall ranking.

In the Economic Performance category, Qatar finished 3rd in the world. The impressive ranking was due to a combination of factors including a low unemployment rate, high fixed capital formation ratio of GDP, the domestic



The annual assessment checks on economic factors in 63 developed countries worldwide. It then breaks out ratings for each country in four categories, Economic Performance, Government Efficiency, Efficiency of the Business Sector and Infrastructure. Finally it tallies a combination of all categories for an overall ranking.

saving ratio to GDP, trade balance of GDP ration, high level of total productivity, a rising per capita GDP and low inflation.

H.E. Dr Saleh bin Mohammed Al Nabit, Chairman of the Planning and

Statistics Authority, was enthusiastic about the report. "These results reinforce Qatar's high international standing in various fields and will contribute to identifying the areas in which we need to consolidate the gains and do

more of improvements ".

Qatar performed so well in the other three categories as well, that 2019 puts them in the top 10 overall in the International Competitiveness Report. They finished fifth (5) in Government Efficiency, tenth (10) in Efficiency of the Business Sector and ranked fortieth (40) in Infrastructure.

Al Nabit said, "We will carefully examine the results of the international competitiveness report along with other indicators that help us to mobilize efforts to strengthen our economy in the future." He also pointed out that Qatar's second national development strategy sets clear goals for the areas of economic infrastructure and private sector development. He believes this will bode well for further growth, and will continue to boost the Gulf state's numbers in future International Competitiveness Reports. The 2019 overall ranking of Qatar as tenth (10) in the world continues their steady upward trend among world economic powers. In 2018 they were ranked fourteenth (14) and in 2017 Qatar was ranked eighteenth (18).

The Chairman was clear about the future, "Qatar has no choice but to diversify its economy. To achieve this, we have to continually improve efficiency and productivity and improve our international competitiveness."



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The history of Qatar

A snapshot of important events

1825 - Al-Thani dynasty establishes control over Qatar and tries to establish independence from Bahrain.

1916 - Deal signed under which Britain controls Qatar's external affairs in return for guaranteeing its protection.

1939 - Oil reserves discovered. Distribution is delayed by World War II, but oil comes to replace pearling and fishing as Qatar's main source of revenue.

1950s - Oil revenues fund the expansion and modernization of Qatar's infrastructure.

1971 - Qatar becomes independent on 3 September.

1985 - It was established that Qatar's North Field was the largest non-associated natural gas field in the world.

1990 August - After Iraq invades Kuwait, Qatar says it will allow foreign forces on its soil. Qatari troops later take part in the liberation of Kuwait.

1995 - Sheikh Khalifa replaced by his son, Hamad, as Emir.

1996 - Al-Jazeera satellite TV launches as an independent channel. Based in Qatar but broadcasting to much of the Arab world, it establishes a reputation for its candid news coverage, something new to much of the region.

2002 - Qatar looms large in US plans for a possible war against Iraq. The al-Udeid air base is developed and expanded. Washington says it will deploy US Central Command staff to Qatar.

2003 March-April - Qatar-based US Central Command forward base serves as the nerve centre in the US-led military campaign in Iraq.

2005 June - Qatar's first written constitution comes into effect, providing for some democratic reforms.

2005 November - Qatar and the US launch a \$14 billion joint project to build the world's largest liquefied natural gas plant. Most of the gas will be exported to the US.

2006 - Qatar became the first Arab country to host the Asian Games. Biggest event in the 55-year history of the Games

2008 December - Saudi Arabia and Qatar agree final delineation of borders and pledge to boost co-operation after diplomatic relations restored in March.

2009 January - Qatar cuts trade ties with Israel over Gaza offensive. Was sole Gulf state to have trade ties with Israel.

2010 December - Qatar wins bid to host 2022 FIFA World Cup.

2011 March - Qatar joins international military operations in Libya, and goes on to arm Islamist opposition groups.

2012 January - The Afghan Taliban say they are setting up a political office in Qatar to facilitate talks.

2012 October - Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani visits Gaza, the first head of state to do so since Hamas took power there five years previously.

2013 June - Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani takes over as Emir after his father abdicates.

2014 September - Qatar and four other Arab states take part in US-led air strikes on Islamic State militants in Syria.

2015 March - Qatar and four other GCC states take part in Saudi-led air strikes on Houthi rebels in Yemen.

2017 June - Diplomatic crisis as Saudi Arabia leads an air, land and sea blockade against Qatar by four Arab countries.

2018 December - Qatar announces that it will withdraw from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in January, citing its greater priority on gas exports.



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Qatar National Vision 2030

Planning for a safe, healthy and prosperous future

During the reign of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, Qatar National Vision 2030 was launched. Its aim was to propel Qatar forward by balancing the accomplishments that achieve economic growth with advancement in both human and natural resources. That same aim holds true today. Qatar describes this vision as a beacon that guides economic, social, human and environmental development of the country for the coming decades, so that it is inclusive and helpful for the citizens and residents of Qatar in various aspects of their lives.

Economic development is an essential part of the Qatar National Vision 2030, as the engine that drives progress by providing better opportunities and a better way of life for the country's citizens. Achieving that objective hinges on Qatar's ability to create a balance between an oil and gas-based and a knowledge-based economy, helping diversify the country's economy

and guaranteeing a stable and sustainable business environment. The Qatar National Vision 2030 will also guide the wise management of the Qatari economy, helping increase competition, attracting more investments, and stimulating growth.

Social development under the Qatar National Vision 2030 encompasses a system dedicated to social welfare and protection for all citizens and to bolstering the role of women in society and empowering them to be active community members.

Social development under the Qatar National Vision 2030 encompasses a system dedicated to social welfare and protection for all citizens and to bolstering the role of women in society and empowering them to be active community members. Social advancement also means equal educational, employment and career opportunities for all citizens, regardless of their

background or gender and a tolerant and fair society that embraces Islam's values of peace, welfare, justice and community. Under the QNV 2030, Qatar will serve as a regional and global example with an increased role in the Middle East and the world.

Qatar cannot develop its economy and society without its human capital and resources: its people. Human development according to the QNV 2030 entails a holistic and modern health care infrastructure that caters to all and an educational system at par with the highest international standards, preparing Qatar's students to take on the world's challenges and become

tomorrow's innovators, entrepreneurs, artists and professionals. Moreover, a world-class education system and equal opportunities will propel Qataris to increase their role in all parts of their country's economy.

Sustaining economic and social growth is impossible without an environmental vision that places environmental preservation for Qatar's future generations at the forefront. The Qatar National Vision 2030 aims to direct Qatar towards a balance between developmental needs and the protection of its natural environment, whether land, sea or air. As such, the QNV 2030 includes an emphasis on establishing an effective legal framework and the environmental institutions that can serve as the guardians of Qatar's environmental heritage. The QNV 2030 also emphasizes the importance of increasing citizens' awareness of their role in protecting the country's environment for their children and the nation's future generations.